

# Censorship Has Different Meanings

**M**OST people object to censorship as a matter of principle, but ruling out discrimination and judgment may limit our freedom of choice.

By claiming that individual liberty authorizes "consenting adults" to see, read, hear and view anything and to participate in any sort of act, even in public, some persons tread on rights of others.

They force their choices upon citizens by making their own selections unavoidable and inescapable, no matter how objectionable they might be to some — even to the majority. Such lack of consideration may intrude upon the morals, family life and religion of many.

At the same time, many forms of censorship are applied by government and by society without particular resistance. It might be argued that there are situations when group discrimination and judgment as to appropriateness may be justifiable.

Regardless of accusations of censorship, bias, prejudice or whatever, newspapers and other media

must exercise judgment in determining what stories will be published or broadcast.

Commercial radio broadcasting sponsors (also known as advertisers) always have exercised considerable control over programming. This has not been generally true in regard to newspapers.

Sponsor censorship naturally developed when television came along, although it might not have been carried over far enough to suit everyone.

The current motion picture censorship is an advisory rating system to tell patrons how dirty they may expect a movie to be.

The Federal Trade Commission and other agencies have assumed the role of censor by enforcing laws which specify "truth in lending," "truth in advertising," and honest weights and measures.

The Legislature has under consideration censorship laws that would allow public officials to refuse disclosure of information concerning an individual's education, finances, medical records, employment, crim-

inal history, and traffic offenses.

U.S. Supreme Court rulings that permit local courts to hold secret hearings in criminal cases is another form of censorship. The high court recently declared that the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) can require advance clearance (censorship) of anything employees may write for outside use.

Student editors of several college newspapers recently cried "Censorship!" because administrators used their veto power to halt use of a sex magazine's promotion of nude modeling on their campuses.

The exercise of responsibility in determining what may be appropriate, decent and acceptable is not necessarily censorship.

Discrimination may be needed to avoid offenses against public morals, individual religion and other rights. It becomes censorship when it is applied for reasons of political power, greed, fraud or for the restriction of individual liberty without public benefit.

Troubles arise over differing opinions of right and truth.